

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SAIGON

INFO ALL EAST ASIAN AND PACIFIC DIPLOMATIC POSTS

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMCONSUL CAN THO

AMCONSUL DANANG

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMCONSUL NHA TRANG

USDEL JEC PARIS

USSAGE NKP

CINCPAC

COGARD

XMT AMEMBASSY SUVA

UNCLAS STATE 056023

COGARD FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, XC, US

SUBJECT: MARCH 20 EA PRESS SUMMARY

INDOCHINA

1. REPORTING ON PRES' APPEARANCE BEFORE NAT'L.
ASS'N. OF BROADCASTERS AT HOUSTON, NYT COVERS QUERY
ON WHAT USG IS DOING TO DETERMINE THE FATE OF MIAS
IN SEA, AND WHETHER HE THINKS A COMPLETE ACCOUNTING
IS POSSIBLE. PRES. REPLIED "WE HAVE BEEN WORKING"
ON PROBLEM SINCE C-F, HAVE HAD "SOME SUCCESS BUT NOT
ENOUGH", AND CONTINUE TO DISCUSS IT WITH NORTH
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VIETS. ADDED THAT HE DOES NOT WANT TO HOLD OUT FALSE
HOPES BUT WILL DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO GET AN
ACCOUNTING.

2. SENATOR STENNIS CALLS FOR PUBLIC CAMPAIGN AGAINST AID FROM ANY INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTION UNTIL HANOI MAKES FULL ACCOUNTING OF MIAS (REUTER, SUN).

3. OPPOSITION FLARES IN SENATE TO ADMIN. REQUEST FOR 474 MILLION DOLS SUPPLEMENTAL MIL AID TO SVN. KENNEDY AND CRANSTON ORGANIZE TESTIMONY BY SENATORS, ACCUSE ADMIN OF TRYING TO OBTAIN "BACK DOOR" FINANCING OF AID PREVIOUSLY CUT BY CONGRESS, GET "UNEXPECTED SUPPORT" OF GOLDWATER (REUTER, SUN). FINNEY (NYT) REPORTS THAT SENATE GROUP, MAINLY FORMER "DOVES",

PROTESTS TO SASC THAT EXTRA MIL AID TO SVN WOULD PERPETUATE "POLICY OF MIL INVOLVEMENT THAT WAS SUPPOSED TO HAVE COME TO AN END WITH THE VN C-F." KENNEDY AND PEARSON OFFER AMENDMENT TO BLOCK INCREASE IN AID. KENNEDY CRITICIZES ADMIN. FOR GREATER INTEREST IN "FUNDING...WAR" THAN IN "ASSISTANCE TO HEAL THE WOUNDS OF WAR", SEES ADMIN BORDERING ON "FISCAL IRRESPONSIBILITY"; DISCOUNTS ADMIN ARGUMENT THAT INCREASE NECESSITATED BY INFLATION WITH STATEMENT THAT "HOUSEWIFE...MUST WONDER AT OUR GOVT.'S WORRY OVER...INFLATION IN SAIGON" WHEN FOOD COSTS ARE "CLIMBING EVERY DAY". CRANSTON SAYS US "MUST STOP WASTING" DOLS "THERE", EXPRESSES CONFIDENCE THAT SENATE MAJORITY CAN BE MUSTERED TO BLOCK INCREASE DUE TO WEARINESS WITH SVN ISSUES, WARINESS OF MIL RE-INVOLVEMENT, AND FEELING THAT MORE AID WOULD TAKE MONEY AWAY FROM DOMESTIC PROGRAMS. FINNEY BELIEVES GOLDWATER POSITION INDICATES TIDE OF SENTIMENT TO CRANSTON: GOLDWATER, NORMALLY PENTAGON SUPPORTER, MAKES "SUGGESTION" THAT HE CAN SUPPORT KENNEDY-PEARSON AMENDMENT, AND SAYS AT ONE POINT THAT WE CAN SCRATCH SVN, WHOSE "FALL INTO THE HANDS" OF NVN IS IMMINENT. FINNEY ADDS THAT PENTAGON OFFICIALS ACKNOWLEDGE THAT MIL AID PROGRAM GOT INTO PRESENT BIND PARTLY BECAUSE DOD OVERSPENT "ON THE ASSUMPTION UNCLASSIFIED

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THAT CONGRESS WOULD PROVIDE THE FULL AMOUNT OF MIL AID ORIGINALLY REQUESTED FOR SVN." MORGAN (WP) REPORTS THAT "PARADE OF SENATORS" TESTIFIES BEFORE SASC AGAINST INCREASE IN MIL AID TO SVN, AND RECEIVES ENCOURAGEMENT FROM "UNEXPECTED QUARTER" WITH GOLDWATER COMMENTS AND "PESSIMISTIC PROGNOSIS" ABOUT SVN. OPPONENTS ARGUE THAT FURTHER FUNDS FOR SVN WOULD "NULLIFY THE INTENT OF CONGRESS TO SET A STRICT CEILING ON...SPENDING IN SVN" WITH SEVERAL SAYING THAT MONEY WOULD BE USED BY SAIGON TO VIOLATE C-F. MORGAN QUOTES MCGOVERN THAT SAIGON "NOT WHOLLY RESPONSIBLE" FOR C-F VIOLATIONS, BUT DID MOVE INTO CONTESTED AREAS "IN OPEN VIOLATION" BEFORE

"INK WAS DRY" ON C-F AGREEMENTS.

4. SVN MIL SOURCES SAY 78 RANGERS FIGHT WAY THROUGH COMMUNIST LINES BUT OVER 300 STILL TRAPPED NE OF KONTUM (UPI NYT, NYDN). VNAF POUNDS NVA/VC SUPPLY CORRIDORS AND BASE CAMPS NORTH OF SAIGON (AP, SUN).

5. SVN DEPUTY PREMIER SAYS 44 MEETINGS OVER PAST YEAR WITH VC IN PARIS ON POSTWAR POLITICAL PROBLEMS WERE UNSUCCESSFUL DUE TO "LACK OF GOODWILL OF THE NLF" (UPI, SUN).

6. FIELD REPORTS SAY KAF CHOPPERS CARRY OVER 1000 FANK TROOPS TO POSITION NEAR OUDONG, WHILE 1000 MORE COME UP-RIVER IN NAVY CRAFT, AND FANK COLUMN MOVES SOUTH TOWARD OUDONG FROM BASE 15 MILES AWAY. GKR OFFICIALS APPEAR WILLING TO RISK CONSIDERABLE MEN AND EQUIPMENT IN MAJOR EFFORT TO RECAPTURE PROVINCIAL CAPITAL (AP, SUN; WP). REBEL GUNNERS STOP FANK FORCE ATTEMPTING TO REACH 1200 GKR TROOPS WHO RETREATED FROM OUDONG (UPI NYT, NYDN; CHITRIB). STRENGTHENED FANK UNITS REPORTED SLOWLY "ATTEMPTING TO PUSH BACK" REBEL DRIVE AGAINST KAMPOT (AP, SUN).

7. RLG AND PL REPRESENTATIVES SIGN LETTER PLEDGING COOPERATION WITH ICC; COMMISSION WAS AUTHORIZED TO CONTINUE IMPLEMENTING LAST YEAR'S C-F ONLY IF BOTH SIDES REQUESTED IT (AP, SUN).

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CHINA

8. PAN AM CHAIRMAN SEAWELL, RECENTLY RETURNED FROM CHINA, TAKES OPTIMISTIC VIEW OF LONG-TERM POTENTIAL FOR AIR TRAVEL, TOURISM, AIR CARGO AND TRADE BETWEEN US AND PRC, BUT SAYS ANY PAN AM AGREEMENTS WITH CHINESE ARE STILL SOMETIME IN FUTURE; STRESSES DIPLOMATIC CONSIDERATIONS INVOLVED, AND STATES: "I FRANKLY STRONGLY SUPPORT THE MOVE TOWARDS NORMALIZATION AND WILL DO ANYTHING AS A PRIVATE CITIZEN THAT I CAN TO HOPEFULLY AID THAT MOVEMENT BECAUSE I THINK IT'S OVERDUE AND PROPER." ADDS THAT THERE MUST BE SOLUTION TO MUTUAL CLAIMS ON FROZEN ASSETS BEFORE BILATERAL ARRANGEMENT IN AVIATION IS POSSIBLE (GOLDSAND, JOC - 2ND OF SERIES).

9. PEOPLE'S DAILY ISSUED FRESH WARNINGS WEDNESDAY OF ACUTE INTERNAL POWER STRUGGLES AHEAD SIMILAR TO TRAUMATIC EPISODES INVOLVING DOWNFALL OF LIU SHAO-CHI AND LIN PIAO; SAID PEOPLE LIKE THEM AND OTHER EX-LEADERS NOW LABELLED TRAITORS WILL RE-EMERGE "10, 20, 30 TIMES" IN FUTURE. REUTER'S SHARP,IN

PEKING, SEES "SUCH ALARMIST-SOUNDING STATEMENTS... CLEARLY AIMED AT KEEPING THE NATION ON ITS POLITICAL TOES." PAPER STRESSED THAT CLASS STRUGGLE WILL CONTINUE FOR VERY LONG TIME.

JAPAN

10. CONTINENTAL ILLINOIS NATIONAL BANK AND TRUST

CHAIRMAN ANDERSON, RETURNED FROM BUSINESS TRIP TO JAPAN, SAYS JAPANESE WILL INCREASE INVESTMENTS ABROAD THAT CAN ASSURE LONG-TERM SOURCES OF RAW MATERIALS. ADDED THAT THERE MAY BE SOME INVESTMENTS IN US THAT WILL BE THREAT TO AUTO INDUSTRY, AND FORESAW INVESTMENTS IN US ELECTRONICS COMPANIES. WITHOUT GIVING FIGURES, ANDERSON SAID THAT US INVESTMENT AMOUNTS TO "GREAT DEAL" IN JAPAN AND "IT'S GROWING ALL OF THE TIME" (LEWIN, JOC).
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11. MITI SAYS JAPAN'S CRUDE STEEL OUTPUT EXPECTED TO TOTAL 132 MILLION TONS IN YEAR BEGINNING APRIL 1, ALMOST UNCHANGED FROM FY 1974 (WSJ). ACCORDING USDA, US FARM PRODUCT SALES TO JAPAN IN 1973 WERE MORE THAN THREE BILLION DOLS (CSM).

12. TREASURY DEPT. INVESTIGATES WHETHER PORTABLE ELECTRIC TYPEWRITERS FROM JAPAN ARE BEING DUMPED IN US (AP, NYT; WSJ).

AUSTRALIA/DIEGO GARCIA

13. DECLARING THAT COUNTRIES BORDERING INDIAN OCEAN DID NOT WANT DIEGO GARCIA TO BECOME OBJECT OF GREAT-POWER RIVALRY, WHITLAM DECLARED TUESDAY THAT GOA WILL OPPOSE US PLANS TO TURN ITS STATION ON ISLAND INTO BASE TO SUPPORT US NAVAL FORCES (AP, NYDN).

14. GOA MAKING MAJOR ATTEMPT TO BREAK INTO E. GERMAN MARKET. SPECULATION IS THAT AUSTRALIA LIKELY TO OFFER GDR SUPPLIES OF MINERALS AND OTHER RAW MATERIALS (JOC).

THAILAND

15. INFORMED BANGKOK SOURCES SAY RTG WILL CONVERT SATTAHIP NAVAL BASE INTO COUNTRY'S FIRST COMMERCIAL DEEP-SEA PORT. COMMUNICATIONS MINISTRY HAS AGREED WITH TRADE AND BUSINESS ASSOCIATION PROPOSALS TO BUILD FACILITIES SUCH AS SILOS AND WAREHOUSES NEAR PORT (AFP, WP).

16. BANGKOK AUTHORITIES REPORT POLICE SEIZURE OF 750,000 DOLS IN COUNTERFEIT US 20 DOL BILLS IN TOWN ABOUT 40 MILES NORTH OF CAPITAL. EARLIER, POLICE HAD SEIZED MORE THAN 100,000 IN FAKE US MONEY IN BANGKOK AREA. POLICE BELIEVE IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN

PRINTED IN HK (UPI CHITRIB, NYDN).

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MALAYSIA

17. REUTER KL REPORTS MALAYSIAN COMMUNIST GUERRILLAS ARE MAKING SOME PROGRESS IN ATTEMPTED COMEBACK, BUILDING EFFORT ON "WELL-TESTED POLICY" OF BEFRIENDING POPULATION. TECHNIQUE OF TREATING PEOPLE WELL AND EVEN ASSISTING THEM IN SOLVING PROBLEMS "HAS PAID GREAT DIVIDENDS" BY MAKING GOM EFFORT TO LOCATE AND ELIMINATE GUERRILLAS MORE DIFFICULT BECAUSE OF FEWER TIP-OFFS FROM PUBLIC. OFFICIALS STRESS THAT DESPITE (IMPENDING) ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH PRC, GOVT. OPERATIONS AGAINST GUERRILLAS WILL CONTINUE UNTIL THEY ARE DEFEATED. PRESENT INDICATIONS ARE THAT ANNOUNCEMENT OF TIES WITH CHINA WILL BE MADE BEFORE UMNO GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN JUNE (CSM).

KOREA

18. CHITRIB'S KIRK IN SEOUL INTERVIEWS KIM DAE JUNG, WHO RECOUNTS STORY OF HIS KIDNAPPING, AND ASSERTS PARK IS NEARING END OF HIS CAREER AS PRES. KIM SAYS, "I AM CONVINCED THE SOUTH KOREANS ARE STILL STRONGLY ANTI-COMMUNIST, BUT WE CANNOT ACCEPT TOTALITARIAN RULE IN THE NAME OF ANTI-COMMUNISM. NO COUNTRY IS SAFE FROM COMMUNISM IF IT DOES NOT GUARANTEE FREEDOM FOR ITS PEOPLE." KIRK CITES KNOWLEDGEABLE OBSERVERS THAT PARK IS DELAYING APPROVAL OF KIM'S APPLICATION TO LEAVE KOREA SO KIM CANNOT CRITICIZE REGIME FROM ABROAD.

PHILIPPINES

19. PHILS PAPER MANUFACTURERS SAY THEY WILL STOP EXPORTING TOILET PAPER BECAUSE OF SHORTAGE CAUSED BY PANIC BUYERS FROM JAPAN (AP, WP).

COMMENT AND ANALYSIS

JAPAN

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20. CSM'S POND IN TOKYO REPORTS DIPLOMATIC SOURCES EXPECTING TWO-WEEK DELAY IN JAPANESE APPROVAL OF HODGSON, LESS AS AN EXPRESSION OF DISPLEASURE OVER HODGSON THAN MILD RETORT TO FOUR-MONTH US DELAY IN

NAMING HIM. POND NOTES THAT IN HODGSON, TOKYO WILL FOR FIRST TIME RATE FORMER CABINET MEMBER AS US AMBASSADOR; JAPANESE DIPLOMAT SAID JAPANESE PUBLIC, PRESS, AND FM "APPRECIATE" THIS. HODGSON'S POSITION AS LOCKHEED V-P, WHICH TRYING TO SELL PATROL PLANES TO JAPANESE ARMED FORCES, PRESENTS NO PROBLEM SINCE PHRASE "CONFLICT OF INTEREST" DOESN'T EXIST IN JAPAN. OTHERWISE, JAPANESE KNOW LITTLE ABOUT HODGSON BEYOND HIS TITLES. AS LABOR RELATIONS EXPERT AT LOCKHEED, HE HAS HAD NO REAL BUSINESS EXPERIENCE IN JAPAN, AND HIS INVOLVEMENT IN US-JAPAN TEXTILE DISPUTE WAS ONLY MARGINAL. IN GENERAL, JAPANESE DIPLOMATS SAY THEY HAD GOOD EXPERIENCE WITH LAST BUSINESSMAN AMBASSADOR INGERSOLL, AND INDICATE THEY EXPECT BEST OF HODGSON. POND RECALLS YASUKAWA MAKING OFFICIAL INQUIRY ABOUT VACANCY EARLY THIS MONTH AND CITES JAPANESE AND AMERICAN DIPLOMATS THAT US-JAPANESE RELATIONS ARE BASICALLY VERY SMOOTH NOW. CITES SOME DIPLOMATS AS ALSO NOTING SALUTARY EFFECT OF CURRENT US-FRENCH QUARREL, SHOWING JAPAN THAT BY CONTRAST US-JAPAN RELATIONS AREN'T AT ALL BAD.

CHINA

21. SECOND IN SERIES OF DORNBERG-BRADSHER ARTICLES (S-N MARCH 19) REVIEWS SINO-SOVIET RIFT, DETAILING CONTENTS OF MOSCOW'S ANTI-PRC PROPAGANDA CHARGES AND CHANNELS EMPLOYED TO EXPRESS THEM SINCE 1969 USSURI CLASHES. THE CHINESE USUALLY REPLY, IN MORE THAN JUST IN KIND; HOWEVER, NEITHER SIDE LIMITS ITSELF TO PURE POLEMICS. IN ALMA ATA, MOSCOW SET UP "COMMITTEE FOR A FREE UNITED TURKESTAN" UNDER LEADERSHIP OF FORMER CHINESE ARMY GENERAL. COMMITTEE IS TRAINING UIGHUR REFUGEES FOR GUERRILLA WARFARE IN SINKIANG AND MAINTAINS "NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT OF EXILE UIGHURS." PRC HAS OWN "LIBERATION UNCLASSIFIED

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FRONT." PURPORTING TO BE UKRAINIAN, IT BROADCASTS THREE HOURS OF PROPAGANDA DAILY TO SOVIET TROOPS, MANY OF WHOM FROM UKRAINE, ON OTHER SIDE OF BORDER. PERIODICALLY, CHINESE FIRE ROCKETS FILLED WITH PROPAGANDA LEAFLETS PREPARED BY UKRAINIAN EMIGRE GROUPS IN CANADA. ARTICLE REPORTS SOME W.EUROPEANS PREDICTING SINO-SOVIET WAR BY LATE SUMMER; THOSE

MAKING PREDICTION EXPECT IT TO BE DELIBERATE AND TO BE TOUCHED OFF BY MOSCOW FOLLOWING ADVICE OF THOSE FAVORING PUTTING PRC BACK INTO PRE-NUCLEAR AGE NOW.

INDOCHINA

22. NYT EDIT SAYS SEA NEWS IS BEGINNING TO HAVE MORBIDLY FAMILIAR RING. ON MONDAY VIET FORCES SUFFERED THEIR HEAVIEST CASUALTIES SINCE C-F. ON SAME DAY CAMBODIAN INSURGENTS CAPTURED MAJOR CITY TWENTY MILES FROM PP; DOD IS ASKING FOR URGENT NEW MILITARY AID TO SVN, AND AMBASSADOR MARTIN IS WARNING "PEOPLE OF THE WORLD" WILL BE EXPOSED TO "ENORMOUS DANGERS" IF US FAILS TO PROVIDE WHOLE-HEARTED SUPPORT FOR THIEU. MARTIN SAYS THOSE WHO DARE QUESTION CONTINUING US MILITARY EFFORT ARE ONLY SUCCUMBING TO NVN'S INSIDIOUS INFLUENCE. EDIT SUMMARIZES FUNDING REQUEST OF DOD WITNESSES BEFORE CONGRESS, OBSERVES THAT IN FIRST YEAR OF SO-CALLED PEACE, US EXPENSES FOR MATERIEL IN VN WERE ONLY 25 PERCENT BELOW LEVEL IN 1972. SAYS IF IT IS NO SURPRISE THAT NEITHER VN SIDE HAS SHOWN ANY INTEREST IN IMPLEMENTING PATENTLY UNWIELDY POLITICAL PROVISIONS OF PARIS ACCORDS, WHAT IS OMINOUS IS UNSTATED ASSUMPTION THAT US IS COMMITTED TO KEEPING WAR GOING ON THIEU'S TERMS. CONGRESS IS ENTITLED TO BE WARY OF CONTINUED DRIFT INTO WAR BY PROXY AFTER HAVING BARRED DIRECT COMBAT INVOLVEMENT IN SEA.

BURMA

23. SUN REPORT FROM RANGOON NOTES THAT BURMA HAS NEW CONSTITUTION, NEW GOVT. AND EVEN NEW NAME, BUT UNCLASSIFIED

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STILL HAS SAME ONE-PARTY LEADERSHIP, SAME RUINED ECONOMY AND SAME DEPRESSING ARRAY OF PROBLEMS. ARTICLE CASTS DOUBT ON PROBITY OF PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS PROVIDED FOR UNDER NEW CONSTITUTION. RESULT IS CONTINUATION OF "BURMESE WAY TO SOCIALISM" - AN ECONOMIC SYSTEM ROUGHLY MODELED ON USSR'S COUPLED WITH FOREIGN POLICY OF STRICT NEUTRALITY. PROGRAM LED TO CHRONIC SHORTAGES, SEVERE UNEMPLOYMENT AND ECON GROWTH RATE THAT LAGGED BEHIND POPULATION INCREASE. IN EFFORT HALT DECLINE, GOVT. HAS DRAWN AWAY FROM CUSTOMARY HOSTILITY TO FOREIGN BUSINESS AND HAS MADE VAGUE GESTURES TO REVIVE WHAT REMAINS OF PRIVATE ENTERPRISE. NEITHER RELAXATION OF ECON CONTROLS NOR SHIFT TO CONSTITUTIONAL RULE HAS WEAKENED NE WIN'S GRIP ON POLITICAL POWER; BOTH DEVELOPMENTS COINCIDED WITH INCIPIENT UNREST. ARTICLE REPORTS

INDICATIONS OF UNREST, INCLUDING LAST WEEK'S INCIDENT
OF STUDENTS STONING BUILDING THAT HOUSED SMALL CONTINGENT
OF US EMBASSY MARINE GUARDS. THERE WAS NOTHING

OVERTLY POLITICAL ABOUT INCIDENT, WHICH US OFFICIALS
APPARENTLY TRACED TO AUTO ACCIDENT SOME WEEKS EARLIER
INVOLVING TWO MARINES; BUT IT WAS FIRST STUDENT
DISORDER OF ANY KIND FOR YEARS

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